

public opinion into proper review, and that they would now do the proper environmental assessment.

Many of us have great reservations about the economic and environmental impact of increasing from 66 flights a year to over 2,200 training flights, some only 300 feet above the mountainous terrain, the impact that this would have on our very prosperous poultry industry and livestock industry. There are additional impacts, as well.

The Air Force also has conceded that it did not do a good enough job in communicating with the public, and indeed it did not, and that they will be, shortly, announcing meetings to occur in Pendleton County and presumably in Virginia, as well. Indeed, I will be meeting today with representatives of the Air Force to press this case.

The reality is, the best proposal would be one in which they either revisit the whole idea completely, or actually reject it and consider expanding the training flights they are doing in the existing training area where it has long been conducted.

□ 1245

So for these reasons, I hope that the Air Force will continue to look at this, to reevaluate. Certainly we have pushed off any effective date significantly. It does call for a fair environmental assessment. It does call for public opinion and public comment. Most importantly, it calls for a complete review and reconsideration of what I consider to be an ill-founded proposal, and I will work to see if we can get the Air Force to agree with that opinion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Wolf] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

#### TAKING ISSUE WITH COMMENTS MADE BY FELLOW MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, in my 5 years at this House I have very rarely come to the well of this great body to criticize the comments of one of my colleagues. I have great respect for the bipartisan and diverse views of all Members of this House, and their right to express the views and concerns and ideas of the people they represent in their respective districts.

But once in a while, a Member of this House makes a comment that is so irresponsible and so outrageous that I simply cannot remain silent. Yesterday one of my colleagues from Texas, the gentleman from Texas, [Mr. PAUL] made a statement that I feel is so irre-

sponsible that in good conscience I simply cannot remain silent.

In his statement on C-SPAN's Washington Journal yesterday Mr. PAUL said this:

I fear and there are a lot of people in this country who fear they may be bombed by the Federal Government at another Waco. I mean, these people committed no crimes.

Mr. Speaker, it is astounding to me that a member of this Federal Government, a Member of this Congress, would say publicly that he fears being bombed by the Federal Government. My fear is that kind of statement made by a public official of this Congress simply expands the hysterical paranoia of those around this country who might be hiding in their closets thinking that the Federal Government is somehow going to bomb them in the sanctity of their private homes.

I think that is sheer lunacy, at best. At worst, it could create and engender the kind of hatred toward our Federal Government that leads to tragedies such as that we all sadly witnessed in Oklahoma City.

Second, as the Member of Congress who represents Waco and the Waco area, and as someone who watched and followed very carefully the proceedings and the tragedy of the Branch Davidian compound, I must say that I am astounded that the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], a Member of this House, would say, despite all of the facts on the table, would suggest that the Branch Davidians and David Koresh committed no crimes.

At best, that is flat wrong and denies the fact and reality. At worst, it is a misrepresentation intentionally of what was done there.

Let me say what the facts were. The facts were that David Koresh raped a 10-year-old girl. We heard that dramatic testimony of that girl, now 14, just a few months ago in the Halls of this House.

Fact: The Federal officials who went into that compound found 48 illegal machine guns and illegal hand grenades.

I would suggest to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL] that the possession of 48 illegal machine guns and illegal hand grenades, I would suggest rape, arson, and murder are a crime in the book of every American family, if it is not a crime in the book of the gentleman from Texas.

I think these statements, Mr. Speaker, deserve a response to the people of Waco, to the people of Mr. PAUL's district, and to the people of this country. I would like to hear him explain his comments that he lives in fear of the Federal Government bombing him, and I would like to hear him explain how, despite all of the clear facts, the facts that the Branch Davidians lit the fires that killed, tragically, those children near Waco, I would like to hear him explain away those facts.

Instead of saying, perhaps I made a misstatement, or I apologize for what I said, or I did not intend to say that,

when Mr. PAUL responded to my response yesterday in the Houston Chronicle he accused me of McCarthyism. Mr. Speaker, I hardly believe that saying that arson, rape, and murder is a crime in this country is anything close to McCarthyism. He went on to defend his contention that the Davidians had committed no crimes.

I would challenge the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], to meet with me in the well of this House during special orders and let us debate this. I believe good people of good will, both Republicans and Democrats alike, who look at the statements of the gentleman from Texas will see that they were irresponsible and dangerous to have been made by a public Member of this House.

#### SALUTE TO THE BIG 10 CHAMPION MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota Mr. RAMSTAD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, it has been a long, hard winter in Minnesota, with record cold temperatures and snowdrifts so high they obscured barns and houses. But last night, the University of Minnesota men's basketball team warmed the heart of every Minnesotan as the Golden Gophers won their first Big 10 Conference Championship since 1982.

Minnesota, hats off to thee.

Today, we salute Coach Clem Haskins and his 1997 championship team as well as the assistant coaches, managers, training trainers, and the best fans anywhere in the Nation. We are Big 10 Champions and proud of it.

Mr. Speaker, last fall none of the experts picked our Golden Gophers to win the title, but they persevered. They won the close games. They personified teamwork. They fought back. They stuck to the game plan. They listened to their coach, Clem Haskins.

One night this week, Coach Haskins told the story on the local television news of running into a woman in his neighborhood grocery store. This woman was accompanied by her young son in a wheelchair. Clem could hardly speak as he recounted that woman's words to him in that grocery store: "Your basketball team has totally captured my son's attention," she said. "The Gophers have inspired my son to walk one day."

Fighting back tears, Coach Haskins told the reporter: "That's really what the world is all about, if you can give people some hope."

Coach Haskins, you and your team have given us hope, and a whole lot more.

Under Clem Haskins' guiding hand, this marvelous mix of young men has rewritten University of Minnesota basketball history:

The first Big 10 title in 15 years, only the third conference championship in the past 60 years;.